

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-30 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 6, 11, 16, 21 and 26 are amended. No new matter is added.

Applicants appreciate the courtesies shown to Applicants' representative by Examiners Zhu and Poon during the February 21, 2008 personal interview. Applicants' separate record of the substance of the interview is incorporated into the following remarks.

**I. The Claims Are Patentable Over The Applied References**

The Office Action (1) rejects claims 1-2, 4-7, 9-12, 14-17, 19-22, 24-27 and 29-30 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 5,467,434 to Hower et al. (Hower) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,625,757 to Kageyama; and (2) rejects claims 3, 8, 13, 18, 23 and 28 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Hower in view of Kageyama, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,785,015 to Smith et al. (Smith). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections.

**B. Claims 1-15**

Regarding independent claims 1, 6 and 11, the applied references fail to disclose "a controller that ... links plural service processing units that are connected to a network with each other to perform the plural service processing operations to the document data on the basis of a result of the interpreting" and "wherein at least two of the service processing units each perform a different subset of the service processing operations."

Hower discloses a network processing system 10 that includes a plurality of printers 12 (12-1 to 12-n) for processing print jobs in accordance with job program instructions (Fig. 1; col. 3, lines 35-49). System 10 provides print services for workstations (clients) 15 (15-1 to 15-n) (Fig. 1; col. 3, lines 50-54). In operation, a client 15 (e.g., client 15-1) has an electronic job ticket 35 that allows a user to create a print job (col. 4, lines 2-12). The system 10 allows the user to select one of print queues 42 (41-1 to 42-n) (col. 4, lines 28-40), each of which is associated with one of printers 12 (col. 4, lines 40-42).

Hower fails to disclose the feature quoted above because Hower discloses only that system 10 allows a user on a client 15 to create a print job that is performed on a given printer 12. There is no controller in Hower that controls a plurality of various printers 12 to perform plural processing operations on document data as recited in the claims, wherein at least two of the printers 12 perform each different subsets of the plural processing operations as claimed.

The Office Action cites to Kageyama as disclosing the claimed "service processing device" and alleges that Hower can be modified as a subunit of Kageyama. Thus, Kageyama fails to cure the deficiencies of Hower.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants request withdrawal of the rejections of claims 1-15..

**C. Claims 16-30**

Regarding independent claims 16, 21 and 26, the applied references fail to disclose "executing means for executing at least one of the service processing operations to the document data on the basis of an interpretation result of the interpreting means" and "wherein at least two service processing devices each perform a different subset of the service processing operations."

Hower fails to disclose the quoted feature because, under the Office Action's interpretation of Hower, combination examiner 37 corresponds to the claimed interpreting means (claim 21), and server processor 50 (Fig. 2) corresponds to the claimed executing means (claim 21). The Office Action alleges that processor 50 corresponds to the claimed executing means because it creates a "print file in PDL", citing col. 4, lines 5-12 and col. 5, lines 4-5 (Office Action, page 6). However, the Office Action's interpretation is not borne out by Hower. At col. 4, lines 5-12, Hower discloses aspects of the job ticket 35 and mentions the combination examiner 37 without detail. At col. 5, lines 4-5, Hower discloses that the server processor 50 is "capable of combining a set of electronic documents, such as print data

(page description language) file and a corresponding combination of print job selections, such as a job ticket, into a job file for printing" (col. 5, lines 3-6). Nowhere in this section does Hower disclose or suggest that the processor 50 executes at least one of the service processing operations (contained in the claimed script) to the document data on the basis of an interpretation result of the interpreting means. Instead, Hower discloses that the server processor 50 can combine a job ticket with print data into a job file for printing. As one of ordinary skill in the art would have known, a job ticket could be combined with print data without executing any service processing operation contained within the job ticket. Moreover, as discussed above in relation to the rejections of claims 1-15, Hower fails to disclose that at least two service processing devices each perform a different subset of the service processing operations.

In contrast, regarding independent claims 16, 21 and 26, the claimed controller/executing means/step of executing operates by using a service processing operation contained in the script, the script being transferred to another service processing device for its controller/executing means/step of executing to execute further service processing operations contained in the script wherein at least two service processing devices each perform a different subset of the service processing operations.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants request withdrawal of the rejections.

**I. Conclusion**

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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